

Movie Review

"Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home"
Directed by Leonard Nimoy
Starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley
★★★★

For the past 20 years, the crew of the Starship Enterprise has been going where no man has gone before on television, in cartoons, in books, in movies and in the imaginations of millions of devoted Trekkies. The newest entry in the legend, "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home," is good, solid entertainment that lives up to the spirit of the original series.

When we left the crew of the Enterprise at the end of "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock," Admiral James T. Kirk (William Shatner) was in deep trouble. In saving Spock (Leonard Nimoy), Kirk had violated seven Star Fleet regulations and destroyed the Enterprise. Kirk and his crew, Dr. McCoy (DeForest Kelley), Scotty (James Doohan), Uhura (Nichelle Nichols), Chekov (Walter Koenig) and Sulu (George Takei), are ordered to return to Earth and face trial.

As our heroes head back to Earth in the Klingon vessel they stole in the last movie, they learn that the planet is being bothered by a probe from outer space.

Spock discovers the probe is sending signals similar to the songs that humpback whales sing. Unfortunately, all whales became extinct during the 21st century. Earth's only hope is for Kirk and company to go back in time to the 20th century and bring some whales to talk to the probe.

They arrive in San Francisco in the year 1986 and begin to search for what they need. Kirk and Spock go looking for whales at a marine biology institute. Scotty, Sulu and McCoy go

looking for a tank to put the whales in so that they can carry them back to the future. Chekov and Uhura go looking for some nuclear fuel aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Enterprise.

During their search, Kirk meets and falls in love with Dr. Gillian Taylor (Catherine Hicks), a marine biologist who specializes in whales. Scotty invents transparent aluminum, Chekov is accused of being a Soviet spy, McCoy cures the sick and Spock learns to curse.

The magic of the "Star Trek" television series was the combination of action, special effects, humor and philosophy. "Star Trek IV" recreates that magic beautifully. There is plenty of action when Chekov is rescued from the Navy and when the whales are rescued from a whaling ship. The special effects are marvelous, especially the psychedelic trip through time. There is humor when Spock tries to use profanity and almost everytime McCoy opens his mouth. There is a nice philosophical touch when we see that Earth is threatened because humans were stupid enough to kill off all the whales.

Trekkies will probably enjoy seeing Spock's parents Sarek (Mark Lenard) and Amanda (Jane Wyatt) again. Saavik (Robin Curtis), Christine Chapel (Majel Barret) and Janice Rand (Grace Lee

Whitney) also make a few quick appearances.

"Star Trek IV" is by far the best movie yet made in the series. There is a good balance of special effects, adventure and characterization. "Star Trek: The Motion Picture" had great special effects, but the characters weren't allowed to do anything but marvel at those effects. The first movie failed mainly because it tried to be philosophical but ended up sounding silly. "Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan" was a great adventure film but only Kirk and Spock were allowed to develop as characters. "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock" was useless and destroyed the impact of the second film.

The only problem with "Star Trek IV" is that it doesn't really cover any new ground. The crew of the Enterprise went back in time to Earth three times in the original series and ran out of dylithium crystals a least a dozen times. The movie is good fun and nice entertainment but it, like the three previous movies, doesn't go anywhere that man hasn't gone before.

Review by Karl Pallmeyer

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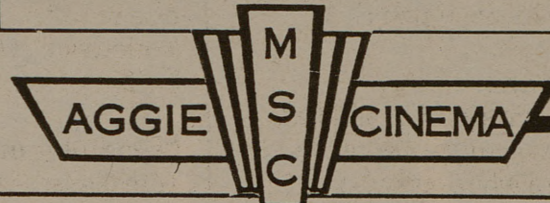
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